294 563 441 466 was sweated labour indeed. Possibly he paid the cutter two pice, the seamstress three annas, the button-loop maker two annas, for each garment. We met one of the button-loop makers one evening as she brought a pile of finished garments, a Chinese girl of ten years, with eyes which looked tired from two years of exquisite hemming on the ten button loops of each Burmese jacket, nine jackets each day. When we had got our jackets the tayok-kalay added up our three bills into one on his abacus. There may be many ways of using an abacus, but our tayok-kalay's was bafflingly simple. He had each bead on the first rung representing one anna, each on the second one representing four of these, that is four annas; and each on the third rung representing four of these again, that is one rupee, there being sixteen annas in the rupee. When he wanted to add Rs. 5/10 and Rs. 9/11 for example, he represented the first sum on the three rungs above the median bar by drawing down towards it, two beads of the first rung, two of the second and five of the third. Then he represented the second sum on the rungs below the bar by drawing up to it three beads of the first rung, two of the second and nine of the third. He then counted up the sum of all the beads along the bar, pushing back every four beads of the first rung and pulling down one of the second as equivalent, pushing back every four of the second and pulling down one of the third again as its equivalent. All this he did with lightning speed, and, counting finally one bead on the first rung, one on the second and fifteen on the third, he announced Rs. 15/5, a sum which my sisters had arrived at long before by mental arithmetic and had, in vain, been trying to thrust on his notice.

• [405 903] 441 563 I needed also a superior quality comb to wind my hair around in a knot at the back of my head, having given away the old one I had as a curiosity in England. My mother took me to the west end of Rangoon where the Chinese community are concentrated in about six or seven streets, mostly narrow streets of three storeyed houses packed closely together, containing valuable ivory and mother-of-pearl inlaid chairs within and jewellery behind safe doors, but bordering deep and dirty drains and congestion in the street. These were houses of rich men who got their money from trading in indigenous products; by long years of industry building up lakhs of money from the supplying of onions, coconuts, potatoes and other dry goods to the retail shops in bazaars. In the Strand running along the south end of these streets and in the broad Latter Street in the centre of the quarter, were the big emporiums of these traders. One of my father's greatest friends U Chein Swan was a Burma Chinese of this description, and we stayed for short periods in his three-storeyed house in 20th Street when we were children. With

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4



about the rains. In Rangoon the annual average rainfall is a hundred inches, but in Maulmein, Akyab, and other towns considerably over twice that amount is registered. In Rangoon, on 3rd November 1879, between one o'clock in the morning and two in the afternoon eleven inches fell. Happily this sort of thing is not usual.

In Mandalay, time was calculated by means of a water-clock, which stood in the bo-ho, the clock-tower by the eastern gate, where were also the gong and drum on which the watches were sounded by one, two, three, or four alternate blows. The water-clock is a simple enough affair. It consists of nothing more than a large vessel filled with water, in which cups are placed, perforated so that an hour—a Burmese nayi—elapses before they sink to the bottom. It is only at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes that the hours of the day and night are equal. At other times they vary, and the Burmans make a great fuss over their complicated calculations. In July the days are longest with thirty-six hours, the night only lasting twenty-four, while these figures are exactly reversed in January. Any inaccuracy in Burmese computations arises from the loss of the fourth book of Bedin (the Indian Vedas), which was destroyed in the bonfire made by the religious of all fishing-nets, snares, weapons of war, and such writings as are denounced in the sacred books. It was by pecking at the ashes of this volume that the domestic fowls of Burma acquired that astronomical lore which induces them to crow all together at midnight (tha'gaung kyet).

It is only, however, in the capital that the water-clock is found, and in the rest of the country, and especially in all the smaller villages and towns, time is only roughly indicated by a reference to the position of the sun or the moon, or to certain daily occurrences taking place at fixed times, as "in the morning when the sun was a span above the horizon"; or "when the sun was as high as a toddy-palm"; "before the sky was light"; "when the light gets strength" about half-past five; "the earliest cock-crowing time"; "when the monks go a-begging," that is to say, six or seven in the morning, according to the custom of the local monastery; "monks' returning time," usually about eight, but varying,